



December 11, 2006

Dear Friend of the Women's Center,

At 35 years old, The Women's Center has reached a turning point! The challenges facing women are as daunting as ever, and the importance of having a place to find help, to create new resources and to fight oppression is huge. **The Women's Center really needs your support!** We know you've heard that before! During the past two years the Center has been in financial crisis. Help was essential in order to keep the doors open, and urgent requests were sent out. Many *have* helped (thank you!), and The Women's Center is still with us and going strong!

We now have 18 support groups, including new ones that focus on bereavement, depression, and eating disorders, as well as the *Women of Color Book Club*. And much older groups, including several for survivors of child sexual abuse and *Women Maximizing Abilities Now*. The Computer Lab is often full, a great resource for many women. The *Women's Counseling and Resource Center's* volunteer therapists are busy seeing low and no-income clients. Volunteers are attentive and helpful to anyone who needs some help. Childcare is again available to women attending groups. The Library is in great shape. Women of diverse backgrounds and situations are here, giving and receiving. Though there is much still to be done, a "can do" feeling abounds.

We have taken significant measures to face up to the financial shortfall:

Expenses have been reduced by reducing staff. The Women's Center now has only one full-time staff member, Ming Chang, the Women's Center Coordinator. She oversees the volunteers, and just about everything else, with grace, kindness, caring and competence.

Expenses have been reduced by donations of supplies and by locating less expensive services. Many community members have stepped up and offered to donate something that is needed. Businesses have also contributed, especially food donations. Less expensive phone service has been found, and we have replaced a cleaning service with volunteers. We are doing without what we can and cutting costs wherever we can.

Expenses have been reduced thanks to the generosity of volunteers. Volunteers have always done so much at the Center and are now doing more than ever. They answer the phone and help women who come to The Women's Center. They clean, paint, fix, and help get the Center organized. They fundraise and keep the computers working. They patch holes in ceilings, repair windows and extract crumbling cement from foundation walls! And *all* our support groups, classes, and workshops are facilitated by volunteers who donate their time and expertise to the Center.

We've increased community participation. We encourage community members to again feel a part of the Women's Center. Board meetings are now open, and the Board holds regular Community Meetings, where we can all discuss changes and ideas about The Women's Center's future. The next one will be on Monday, January 22 at 6:30pm at the Women's Center. The Board is recruiting additional members to be elected that evening. If you are interested in joining the Board, please email board@cambridgewomenscenter.org or call (617) 354-8807 for more information. If you would like to be involved and/or help in other ways, please contact Ming at (617) 354-6394 or by email: ming@cambridgewomenscenter.org.

Financial stability is still a huge challenge. Please be as generous as you can and give the Women's Center your financial support, which is fully tax-deductible (checks made payable to **The Women's Center**, and sent to The Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, Cambridge MA 02139). Your help is needed right now!

In sisterhood,

Elaine Westerlund and Laura Cherry, Board members, and Judy Norris, volunteer.

A non-profit tax-exempt organization

A THANK YOU GIFT

To thank you for your donation of \$125 or more, you will receive a free poster from the Women Activist Series by Betsy Warrior. These gorgeous and unique posters have been exhibited at local galleries and are a powerful tribute to women's international activism. They make wonderful gifts for yourself or others. For more information or to choose one of the seven full-color, matted posters, please check our website at www.cambridgewomenscenter.org.

To receive our monthly calendar, and event announcements and reminders, sign up for the Women's Center's e-list at our web site, www.cambridgewomenscenter.org

WISH LIST

To arrange, call Ming at (617) 354-6394

For the Children's Room, in good condition

Large clean carpet
Small or medium size couch in good condition
Big new throw pillows, bright colors
Wall lamps or sturdy floor lamps
Medium and large lego or duplo blocks
Playdoh with some toys to use with it
Washable multiracial dolls (vinyl)
Play strollers with a few dolls & bottles
Doll accessories like bottles, diaper bag etc.
Simple dollhouse, or things for a doll corner
People and animal puppets (vinyl), small
Play kitchen; pots and pans and play food
Art supplies (beads, stickers)
Toy cash register
Basic non-breakable toys: blocks, animals (plastic/wood, not stuffed), cars, trucks.
TV/VCR and TV hutch
Small children's size wooden chairs

For the Computer Lab

Newer computers, Good desk chairs
Computer tables, Desk lamps

For meeting rooms:

Table lamps, Side tables
Small comfortable soft-seated chairs
Good large carpets

For the kitchen:

Stainless steel spoons, forks and knives
Napkins, paper towels, baggies, liquid dishwashing soap, coffee, tea, honey, cream

For maintenance:

Trash bags (large kitchen size), Kleenex, Toilet paper, buckets, mop, broom, Good snow shovels, paint brushes, roller covers, sandpaper

EXPANDING AND STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY

We hope and believe that as more and more women feel a sense of ownership and belonging and power, new ideas and programs and energy to launch them will spring forth, and those programs will bring possibilities for new funding. We welcome the involvement of all women in moving the Center forward. For information about the variety of ways you can be involved, contact Ming@cambridgewomenscenter.org or Ming at (617) 354-6394. The Board, Staff, and volunteers are committed to making sure that women from different races, cultures, backgrounds, and lifestyles feel welcome and included. Just as when the Center was founded in 1971, we know that we *are* the community and the community is us."

FEEDBACK ABOUT THE WOMEN'S CENTER:

from a June, 2006 survey

"Helpful, knowledgeable volunteers"
"Safe space"
"Meeting women from a wide variety of backgrounds"
"Non-stress atmosphere, respectful of privacy"
"A lot of information available"
"Compassionate, patient, helpful volunteers"
"Friendly and accommodating staff"
"Support group saved my life"

AND WE WISH FOR LOTS MORE VOLUNTEERS:

We need volunteers to do regular weekly slots answering the phone, greeting and helping women who come to the Center.

ALSO:

Childcare volunteers for when women request it so they can attend a group
Cleaning : to regularly (once a week or less) clean a specific area of the house
Grant-writing and many fundraising-related tasks, including making calls to ask for donation of goods, food and/or money, data entry, writing thank you notes.
Tabling at events. Posting flyers.
Caring for the houseplants

Fix-it: whatever your skills or interests, there's a job for you! Caulking, getting drainpipes to drain, replacing clapboard or an aging fence, refinishing a floor, painting, shoveling snow, you name it!

To find out more about volunteering, PLEASE call Ming at (617) 354-6394 or email her at ming@cambridgewomenscenter.org

"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."

Count on me! I/We want to contribute:

\$2,000 \$1,500 \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 other \$ _____

Please make your tax-deductible check payable to The Women's Center.

I/We would like to become a regular **monthly sustainer**, with a pledge of \$ _____ /per month.

I'd like to include The Women's Center in my retirement or other future plans.

My gift will be matched by my employer: _____

Tel: _____

Send me a volunteer application. I'd like to learn more about joining the Board of Trustees.

Name _____

Tel(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My email address is: _____

Please email me: The newsletter Monthly calendar (We save money and paper by emailing)

I prefer to get the newsletter in the regular mail.

